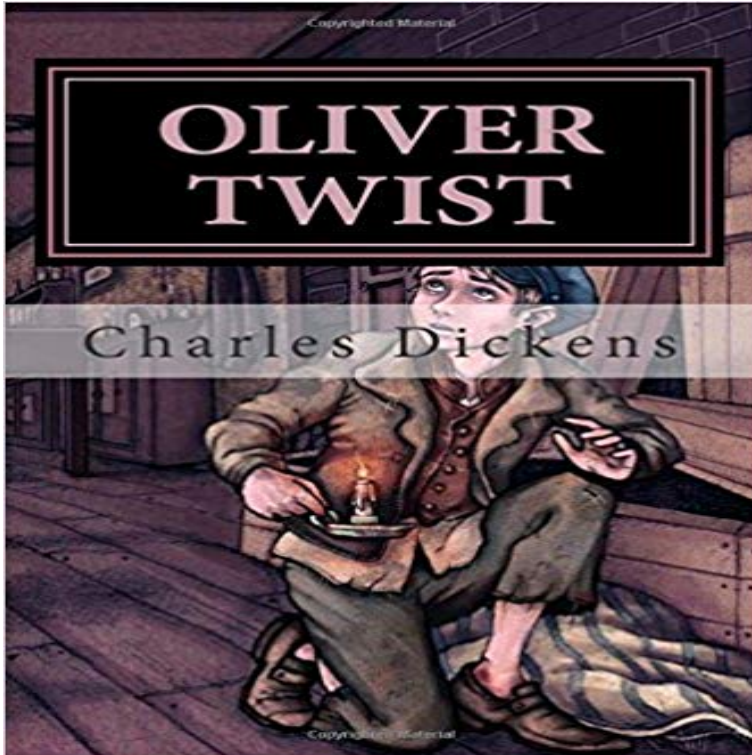


Oliver Twist



Oliver Twists mother dies after the birth of her child in a workhouse. The infants father is unknown, and the orphan is placed in a private juvenile home. After nine years of mistreatment, the boy is returned to the workhouse for even more abuse. After representing his fellow sufferers in an attempt to get more food, Oliver is punished and is apprenticed to Sowerberry, an undertaker. Noah Claypole, a charity boy working for Oliver's master, goads Oliver to rebellion, for which Oliver is savagely flogged. Consequently, Oliver runs away and heads for London. Near London, Oliver joins company with John Dawkins, The Artful Dodger, a questionable character who brings the boy to Fagin, the ringleader of a gang of criminals. Instructed in the art of picking pockets, Oliver goes out with Charles Bates and the Dodger. His companions pick an old gentlemans pocket and flee, and Oliver is arrested for their offense. At the police station, the terrified boy is cleared by the testimony of the bookseller who witnessed the theft. Oliver collapses and is taken home by Mr. Brownlow, the victim of the crime. While Oliver recovers at his benefactors home, Brownlow is puzzled by the resemblance between Oliver's features and the portrait of a young woman. Fagin is apprehensive and furious at Oliver's rescue. Nancy, one of his trusty retainers, is set on the boys trail as the gang shifts headquarters. Mr. Grimwig, Brownlow's friend, has no faith in Oliver, so Oliver is sent on an errand to test his honesty. The boy is recaptured by Nancy and her friend Bill Sikes, a vicious lawbreaker. Oliver is restored to Fagin, who holds him in strict captivity for a while. In the meantime, Bumble, a minor parish official from Oliver's birthplace, answers Brownlow's advertisement inquiring about Oliver. Bumble turns Oliver's benefactor against him by grossly misrepresenting the boys history and

character. Eager to get Oliver completely in his power by thoroughly involving the child in some crime, Fagin convinces Bill Sikes to use Oliver in a major burglary that is being planned. Sikes takes Oliver westward through the city to a rendezvous near Chertsey with Toby Crackit. At the house that is to be burglarized, Oliver is hoisted through a small window. The occupants are aroused and in the resulting melee, Oliver is shot. The robbers run off with the wounded Oliver but abandon him in a ditch. In the workhouse, Sally, the old pauper who attended Oliver's mother, is dying. At her urgent request, Mrs. Corney, the matron, sees the old woman alone before she expires. Immediately thereafter Bumble and the matron agree to marry.

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